

Veterans Day

Americans honored our nation's veterans on Veterans Day, November 11. Many events were held across Network 2.

"More than 48 million have answered the call to military service since our nation was founded, and 25 million are still with us," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs, **Anthony J. Principi**.

"They are giants. We must never forget what our veterans have done for us," said Principi. "It is our responsibility to honor our fallen heroes, serve the veterans of today and prepare for the needs of tomorrow's veterans."



Disabled Veterans Get Health Care Priority

VA is establishing priority access to health care for severely disabled veterans under new regulations recently announced.

"It is unacceptable to keep veterans with service-connected medical problems waiting for care," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs, **Anthony J. Principi**. "These veterans are the very reason we exist, and everything we do should focus first on their needs."

The new regulation is being implemented in two phases. Under the first phase, which is being implemented immediately, VA will provide priority access to health care for veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 50 percent or greater. This new priority includes hospitalization and outpatient care for both service-connected and non-service-connected treatment.

In the second phase, which will be implemented next year, VA will provide priority access to other service-connected veterans for their service-connected conditions.

Awards and Recognition



• **Dr. Lawrence H. Flesh**, Interim Network Director and **Mary-ellen Piche**, Stratton VA Medical Center Director have advanced to the "Fellow Level" of American College of Health Executives (ACHE). Formal convocation will be at the ACHE Congress in March.

• **Robin Johnson** and **Patty Ciancaglini**, Voluntary Service, Canandaigua VA Medical Center received a "Partnership Award" from the American Red Cross for their cooperative work between paid and volunteer staff.

• **Dr. Kerry Donnelly**, VA Western New York Healthcare System passed the final phase of her examination by the American Board of Professional Psychology in achieving "diplomate" status in Neuropsychology. This is the highest level of recognition of clinical expertise and scholarship among practicing psychologists.

Syracuse Construction

Syracuse VAMC has begun construction of a new \$3.8 million emergency room project. The space will triple the number of examining beds (from 5 to 15). The ED will move to the ground floor, bringing a new look to the north entrance of the medical center. Target for completion is February 2004.



Pictured (left to right): Evan Pokorney, MD, Lead Physician; James Cody, Syracuse VA Medical Center Director; U.S. Congressman James Walsh (25th District, New York); Gary Tyndall, MD, Medical Director, Emergency Department.

In the News



- **Linda Carpinello-Dillenbeck**, Stratton VA Medical Center (VAMC), Mammography Technician was featured in a recent Times-Union article.
- **Mary-Ellen Piché**, Director, Stratton VAMC signed a Partners in Dementia Care Memorandum of Understanding between the Alzheimer's Association Chapter in Albany and the Stratton VAMC. This is a wonderful collaboration and sharing of resources between VA and our community partners.
- Network employees, **Joe Cohen** and **Donna Dardaris** held presentations at each medical center. Topics included Network successes, the Baldrige Award, and strategic planning.
- Syracuse VAMC employees, **Joseph Ortolano**, Veterans Service Center and **Richard Kazel**, Co-Manager, Medical VA Care Line were interviewed for a radio program. They discussed the Syracuse VA 50th anniversary celebration, local VA history, and recent changes in the VA benefit policy.
- The new Ithaca VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) will open in January 2003, at the Cayuga Medical Center East Campus. The Clinic will serve the more than 6,000 veterans of Tompkins County and will provide primary care, behavioral health, and nutrition counseling services. Cayuga Medical also operates the Cortland CBOC.
- Syracuse VAMC employees: **Dr. Abid Iraqi**, **Cookie Baickle, NP**, and **Terry Lynn Hughes, RN** are published in the November 2002 issue of the Journal of American Medical Director's Association (JAMDA). Their submission is entitled: "Letter to the Editor: Ethics Corner: Comments on Ethics Corner in JAMDA Issue May/June, 2002."
- **Joe Striano**, Geriatrics and Extended Care Clinical Coordinator, will present "Partners in Dementia Care: Caring for Veterans With Dementia" at the Joint National Council on Aging and American Society on Aging Conference held in Chicago, March 2003.

Goalsharing Awards

Goalsharing payouts for fiscal year 2002 will appear in the November 22 paychecks. Network 2 will pay out \$3,069,900.00 in award money. Goals for fiscal year 2003 are due in January.

Appointments

- **Dr. Akintaya Akinlawon** has been named the Lead Psychiatrist at the Bath VA Medical Center (VAMC).
- Stratton VAMC, Cardiac Cath Lab Manager, **Rene Bloomer, RN** was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force Reserve. Rene was also selected to attend the Chief Nurse School.
- **Milton E. Broadwell, MSED, CRNA, LNP**, Syracuse VAMC was elected to the Board of Directors, New York State Association of Nurse Anesthetists (NYSANA).
- **Jeff Grandon** was selected as the Network Webmaster.
- **Rena Nessler**, Prosthetic Representative, Canandaigua VAMC has been appointed as the Minority Veterans Program Coordinator for Canandaigua and the Rochester VA Outpatient Clinic
- **Bruce Tucker** has been selected as the Social Work Executive at the Bath VAMC.

Conference Held in WNY

submitted by Lany Mankowski

Network 2 and the Women Veterans Health Care Council presented a conference at the VA Western New York Healthcare System (VAWNYHS) in Buffalo, entitled "Intimate Partner Violence & Sexual Harassment in Women Veterans: Prevalence, Provider Inquiry and Health Outcomes".

Isabel Rose, PhD, MSW, Professor, Wayne State University and winner of the VA Pre-Doctoral Research Fellowship Award was the guest lecturer. Dr. Rose surveyed 748 female veterans residing in Network 2 to test hypotheses predicting the relationship between trauma history and symptoms of depression, anxiety, somatization and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Dr. Rose's research underlines the importance of incorporating interpersonal violence screening, prevention and intervention programming in the health care services for female veterans.

Following the keynote address, a panel of experts that included **Judge Jeannette Ogden**, Buffalo City Court, **Faith Hoffman**, VAWNYHS, Women Veteran's Program Manager and **Judith Powers**, Buffalo VA Regional Office, Women Veteran's Coordinator answered questions.